



RECORDS MANAGEMENT ADVICE

Issued: February 2016

Basics of Records Management:

Benefits of Managing Public Records

Purpose: Provide guidance to state government agencies on the benefits of effective management of public records through an established records management program.

An effective records management program offers several benefits:

1. Promotes a positive reputation for State Agencies

Government agencies need to remain accountable for the records they create and maintain. Public records document agency business. With proper management agencies can show they are taking correct action for the appropriate amount of time and for the right reasons. When an agency demonstrates proper public records organization (*a management program where records are controlled and destroyed in accordance to law*) the state's reputation is improved, as is the public's confidence in state government.

2. Enables the agency to fulfill its mission

Key components of a records management program include a records inventory, retention schedules, and an office file plan. These components help identify and protect the essential records of your agency; those records needed to keep the agency functional. Locating what you need, when you need it is a vital component to running an agency effectively.

3. Promotes cost effective business practice

Time – Retaining records that document the agency's actions and experiences help prevent the wasting of time and resources during staff turnover.

Storage Costs - A proper records management program will reduce the volume of records stored and improve storage/retrieval systems. Records on current schedules will be destroyed when they should be, making the best use of physical and digital space (both which state agencies can pay for).

Litigation Costs - An efficient records program will limit the risk and cost associated with FOIA requests and any possible litigation. Any penalties for the inability to produce requests could be avoided by having an organized program where employees can locate records.

Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available at
<http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/records/state/statetraining.html>